
HOWELL, COLIN D. *Blood, Sweat and Cheers: Sport and the Making of Modern Canada*. Themes in Canadian Social History Series. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001. Pp. viii + 161. Selected Bibliography, index. Can\$45.00 cb., Can\$15.95 pb.

Blood, Sweat and Cheers is designed to introduce readers "to the way in which social historians approach the history of sport" (p. i), and it does so admirably. The book is clearly written. It summarizes the important work done by prominent writers of Canadian sports history (Morrow, Bouchier, Gruneau, Whitson, Metcalfe, Kidd and others) and also addresses subjects (such as gambling) that have been either ignored or underemphasized. Anyone interested in the history of Canadian sports will find this volume informative.

The book begins with an "Introduction" to the field of sports history, and this is followed by six chapters entitled, in chronological order, "Blood," "Respectability," "Money," "Cheers," "Bodies," "Nation." In my view, the most successful chapters are "Blood," "Cheers," and "Bodies." The first quickly but suggestively surveys the history of sports such as cockfighting, hunting and horseracing that prevailed in rural or pre-industrial urban Canada. The second contains a very intelligent investigation of spectators and their relationships to athletes over the years. The third incorporates a useful survey of women's sports as well as a stimulating discussion on the use of the body to proclaim identities.

"Respectability" and "Money" are less thought provoking than the best three chapters but are still very worthwhile. "Respectability" looks at the "new sport culture" (p. 50) of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, one that was dominated by team games. In "Money" the main subject is professional sports. A great deal of good work has been published on these themes, and Howell's primary task when addressing them is to synthesize. He carries out his job impressively.

The least appealing chapter is "Nation." Here there is a lot of good information, especially on government promotion of sport, but the author tries to do too many things at once. He does not keep the reader focused on sports as "unifying cultural enthusiasms" (p. 129), though he believes they have been for Canadians of different eras. Probably the last two pages should have been in a Conclusion to the whole book.

I have only two major criticisms of the book, and both relate to its brevity. The first shortcoming is that too many sports are mentioned only in passing or perhaps not mentioned at all. One can accept that an "exhaustive narrative" (p. i) is not intended and yet feel it is legitimate to ask how themes addressed or arguments advanced would apply not only to hockey, baseball, and other major sports but also to combat sports (aside from boxing), racquet sports (badminton, squash, etc.), shooting sports, auto racing, curling, skiing, figure skating, bowling (lawn and especially pin), "extreme" sports, and more activities. The second problem is that Howell, like so many of the sport historians whose work he summarizes, seems too inclined to see Canadians as members of this or that social class. When examining most sports themes, including changing participation patterns or the meanings attached to different games, there are more useful categories than class; among them are ethnicity, age, and religion. Every now and then Howell discusses sports developments among Aboriginal peoples. Brief glances at other specific groups, for example Japanese-Canadians, adolescents, or Mennonites, would have been welcome.

However, as mentioned earlier, this is a valuable book that outlines the information contained in hundreds of books and articles (many identified in a helpful "Selected Bibliography") and sometimes goes beyond it. The cover photograph of Jacques Plante is terrific, and the whole layout is attractive. Colin Howell and the University of Toronto Press have earned three cheers from all students of sport history.

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